

HISTORY

“DOZENS OF WHORES, BUT NOT ONE SINGLE WIFE:”
POLICING GENDER IN SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
BROADSIDE BALLADS

A CREATIVE PROJECT
SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS
FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

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This project is currently available at: slgreulach.iweb.bsu.edu/genderandbroadsides/

This digital interactive scholarly work has its origins in a paper created in Dr. James Connolly's Seminar in Historical Research in the spring of 2016. In this course, I wrote a research paper on the notion that Stuart era queens faced much harsher depictions than earlier queens due, in large part, to their status as Catholics. In order to fully address this argument, I reviewed existing scholarship on the perceptions of monarchy and its gendered nature while looking specifically at female rule under Elizabeth I and Mary I. For this paper I also examined the role of the queen consort not only in England but in Europe generally. I also examined the religious tensions to more fully understand the impact of Catholicism perceptions on the Stuart queen consorts. In the fall of 2015, I took the Digital History Seminar with Dr. Douglas Seefeldt where I created a website, which allowed me to familiarize myself with HTML and FileZilla used for both projects.

This project in a way did start in the spring 2016 with the paper for my seminar in historical research. An independent study with, Dr. Tara Wood, during the summer 2016, helped me to gain a more nuanced understanding of this era. In addition to researching broadside ballads, I read important secondary scholarship on the subject of women in early modern Europe. I started with Merry Hank-Wiesner's, *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*. I then focused my readings moved to focus solely on England with *Women in the English Renaissance and Reformation* by Retha Warnicke, *Women and Religion in England, 1500 – 1720* by Patricia Crawford, and *An Ordered Society: Gender and Class in Early Modern England* by Susan Dwyer Amussen. I also researched the history of broadside ballads by reading works such as David Fowler's *A Literary History of the Popular Ballad*, and Leslie Shepard's *The Broadside*

Ballad: A Study in Origins and Meanings. These works helped to put the ballads into context of what was happening in the seventeenth century. When I first started this project I wanted to look at gender and sin in broadsides. However, after doing research with broadsides my project took a different turn. Although I still looked at religion and sin as part of this project, it is no longer the prime focus. I found that early modern debates over gender and the public way that broadsides discuss gender roles to be more prevalent.

As I went through the broadsides available in both print and digital formats, I put relevant information into a spreadsheet. This allowed me to have title, name of the author and publisher (if available), what collection they originally came from, their identification number for ballads from the *English Broadside Ballads Archive*, and the search term I used to find them. In the case of the broadsides found in the University of California Santa Barbra's *English Broadside Ballads Archives* after putting the information into my spreadsheet, I then had to put the ballads in to a plain text format in order to be able to analyze them with Voyant. Most of the ballads from this database had already been transcribed, and I only had to put them into plain text form. The process for the ballads that were in *Early Ballads: Illustrate of History, Traditions, and Customs; also Ballads and Songs of the Peasantry of England*, and *A Pepysian Garland: Black – Letter Broadside of the Ballads of the Years 1595 – 1639* was a bit different. I also recorded all the information in the spreadsheet, but I then had to transcribe the ballads into a plain text form. I used Notepad for this. I also saved the scanned version of the ballad.

Once I had all of the ballads transcribed, I then separated them into different time periods. I choose to separate the ballads into different eras in order to examine them more closely in proper historical context. I separated these ballads into three categories: The Stuarts 1600-1650, Restoration 1650-1690, and The New Era 1690-1739. Using these different categories

helped me to see if ballad content changed over the different periods and allowed me to compare between eras. Voyant is a textual analysis tool that allowed me to input all the ballads in together as a corpus or in their own separate categories. When using Voyant's word cloud tool this showed the most frequently used words for the corpus. The more often a word is used, the larger the word appears in the word cloud. Visualization allows the viewer to, at glance identify the words that the broadside authors found to be most important, and to often show themes throughout ballads. This also allowed me to be able to pin point what words were used the most and examine in context. Voyant's key words in context function allows one to choose a key word and look at the few words before and after that term. I found this most useful when looking at how "man", "lord", "wife", "God", and "maid" were used throughout the corpus of ballads. This allowed me to pull excerpts from the ballads and then explain their significance.

Although the research and the use of Voyant was a larger part of my project so was actually putting the creative project website together. I used a template from free-css.com and used NoteTab Light, an HTML text reader, to modify the website template. This process included coding drop downs menus and modifying the website layout. Then I uploaded broadside ballads images and both the primary and secondary sources pages.

I then uploaded my contextual and interpretive text, that I originally wrote in a word document and then inserted into my template in the appropriate place. In writing the text first in a word document and then putting it into using text wrangler HTML made it easy to edit and add text as needed before uploading the finishing project to my website. This process also allowed me to be able to easily send this text to my advisors so they could make any recommendations for revision. The creative commons license that I used for this project is Attribution, ShareAlike, NonCommercial, and NoDerivatives.

Using a digital format allows this project to be interactive, something a print format would not allow. It allows users not only to look at the ballads but go directly to the *English Broadside Ballads Archives* where they were found to see them for themselves. In being a digital interactive scholarly work, this project allows this project to be more widely accessed than it could have been in print format.